Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LAHORE 00034 091223Z

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 NEA-07 ISO-00 AID-01 SS-07 NSC-06 /025 W
---------- 031917
R 090815Z JAN 76
FM AMCONSUL LAHORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 690
INFO AMCONSUL KARACHI
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY DACCA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAHORE 0034

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (MCGOVERN, GEORGE), PFOR, US, PK
SUBJECT: CODEL MCGOVERN VISIT TO LAHORE

REF: ISLAMABAD 0181

1. FOLLOWING HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL VISIT OF SENATOR MCGOVERN AND PARTY TO ISLAMABAD AND LARKANA (REFTEL), GOP AND GOPUNJAB WENT ALL OUT TO MAINTAIN WARM AFTERGLOW DURING LARGELY CEREMONIAL VISIT TO LAHORE JANUARY 6-7.

2. ON ARRIVAL (ONE HOUR LATE) FROM LARKANA BY ODRP AIRCRAFT, SENATOR AND MRS. MCGOVERN WERE RECEIVED BY GALAXY OF GREETERS WELL ABOVE NORMAL FOR CODEL, INCLUDING PUNJAB ASSEMBLY SPEAKER SHEIKH RAFIQ AHMAD, DEPUTY SPEAKER, ASSEMBLY SECRETARY, SEVERAL MPAS (E.G., BEGUM REHANA SARWAR, RECENT LEADER GRANTEE), ACTING PUNJAB CHIEF SECRETARY, LAHORE COMMISS-IONER AND D.C., MILITARY SECRETARY TO GOVERNOR, PLUS CONGEN OFFICERS. MCGOVERNS WERE GARLANDED, THEN MILITARY SECRETARY CONVEYED SURPRISE INVITATION FOR THEM AND MS. DONOVAN TO STAY AT GOVERNMENT HOUSE AS GUESTS OF GOVERNOR AND BEGUM ABBASI, IN LIEU HOTEL INTERCON, WHICH THEY ACCEPTED. CHIEF MINISTER QURESHI, CHIEF SECRETARY MUZAFFAR AND INDUSTRIES MINISTER MALIK, WHOSE PLANE FROM LARKANA FOLLOWED SENATOR'S, ALSO CAME OVER TO RECEIVE.

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PAGE 02 LAHORE 00034 091223Z

3. SENATOR GAVE INFORMAL PRESS CONFERENCE AT AIRPORT

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006

FOR 20 NEWSMEN (SHEPHEREDED BY GOP PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR FOR PUNJAB HASHMI) IN WHICH HE ACCENTUATED THE POSITIVE IN CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS ON PAKISTAN'S ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND DEDICATION OF U.S. AID TO DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL SECTOR TO HELP POOREST PEOPLE. ALL ELEMENTS OF QUASI-CONTROLLED PRESS, HOWEVER, FOLLOWED SUIT IN HEAD-LINING SENATOR'S PASSING AGREEMENT WITH NEWSMAN'S LOADED QUESTION WHETHER "INDIA'S ENTRY INTO NUCLEAR CLUB HAS DISTURBED BALANCE OF POWER" IN REGION. (SENATOR ADDED "I WOULD HOPE INDIA WOULD CONCENTRATE ITS RESOURCES ON ITS OWN INTERNAL DEVELOPMENT. I THINK THAT'S IN THE INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY.")

4. SENATOR GAVE 15-MINUTE TAPED TV AND SHORTER RADIO PAKISTAN INTERVIEW BEFORE LUNCH, EMPHASIZING HIS FAVORABLE IMPRESSIONS OF PRIMIN BHUTTO AND CONSTRUCTIVE NATURE OF THEIR TALKS. LATE ARRIVAL CURTAILED SOMEWHAT FULL PROGRAM OF HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SIGHTSEEING LAID ON BY GOP AND COPUNJAB FOR AFTERNOON. JUST BEFORE STARTING, SENATOR WAS JOINED BY BREATHLESS INDUSTRIES MINISTER KHALID MALIK "DEPUTED BY GOVERNMENT" TO SERVE AS MINISTER-IN-WAITING FOR REMAINDER OF VISIT. (MALIK LATER TOLD ME HE HAD BEEN ASSIGNED AT LAST MINUTE PERSONALLY BY BHUTTO, WHOM HE IS CLOSE TO, WITH WARNING THAT EVERYTHING GO RIGHT OR THOSE RESPONSIBLE "WOULD ANSWER TO HIM.")

5. AFTERNOON TOUR OF CARPET FACTORY, BADSHAHI MOSQUE, LAHORE FORT AND PUNJAB MUSEUM PLEASED CODEL AND GENERATED MUCH FAVORABLE PUBLICITY. AS USIS REPORTS SEPARATELY, THERE WAS EXCELLENT MULTIPLE PHOTOCOVERAGE IN ALL PAPERS. SENATOR WAS FIRST VVIP IN RECENT MEMORY TO CLIMB TO TOP OF BADSHAHI MINARET, PERMITTING MOST IMPRESSIVE PRESS PHOTO AGAINST LAHORE PANORAMA. (SEE USINFOTELS FOR OTHER DETAILS OF PROMINENT MEDIA COVERAGE.)

6. GOVERNOR'S DINNER THAT EVENING EXPANDED ON SHORT NOTICE FROM 26 TO 40, PERMITTING UNEXPECTED ATTENDANCE OF CHIEF MINISTER, MINISTER-IN-WAITING, CHIEF SECRETARY AND I.G./ POLICE RASHID AND WIVES ALONG WITH SPEAKER, FIRST MINISTER KHALIQ AND OTHERS EARLIER INVITED. SENATOR HAD AMIABLE CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 LAHORE 00034 091223Z

TALK WITH GOVERNOR STRESSING DOMESTIC SUBJECTS.

7. POLICE MOTORCYCLE AND JEEP ESCORTS CLEARED WAY FOR SENATORIAL PARTY THROUGHOUT LAHORE VISIT AND GOVERNOR PUT CAR AT DISPOSAL. DRIVE TO BORDER MORNING JANUARY 7 UNEVENTFUL EXCEPT FOR VISIT TO SHALIMAR GARDENS EN ROUTE AND REVIEW OF PAKISTAN RANGERS HONOR GUARD AT FRONTIER.

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8. FOREGOING ILLUSTRATES HOW CODEL WAS ACCORDED RED-CARPET TREATMENT FAR BEYOND NORMAL PROTOCOL REQUIREMENTS, AS REPORTED REFTEL, UNTIL END OF TOUR. SEVERAL PRINCIPALS INCLUDING CHIEF MINISTER AND MINISTER-IN-WAITING TOLD ME BHUTTO HAD GIVEN PERSONAL INSTRUCTIONS FROM LARKANA TO "GO ALL OUT" IN LAHORE. LOCAL APP NEWS EDITOR CONFIDED TO USIS THAT PRESS WAS INSTRUCTED TO HANDLE AND PUBLICIZE SENATOR "AS STATE VISITOR." OTHER PRESSMEN OPINED THAT NO OTHER AMERICAN VISITO, EXCEPT NIXON, HAD RECEIVED BETTER PRESS HANDLING OR GENERAL TREATMENT IN LAHORE. ALL TOLD, CODEL WAS EMINENT SUCCESS FROM BOTH PAK AND U.S. VIEWPOINTS HERE.
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